

Your Role in Combating the Insider Threat

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Defense Intelligence Agency's (DIA) Counterintelligence and Security Activity (DAC) recently produced a guide to help its members understand their responsibilities for reporting suitability issues and potential espionage indicators that may surface in a colleague's behavior. The guide cites several conclusions reached in the 2002 study conducted by the Defense Personnel Security Research Center (PERSEREC), the complete text of which may be found elsewhere on the NCIX Web site. Because the guide is so precise and factual, several portions of it have been extracted in order for it to be of use by the widely diverse group of readers who visit the NCIX Web site. DIA's generosity in permitting us to bring this information to you is greatly appreciated.

FOREWORD

There is no established formula for recognizing that someone is involved in espionage. This much can be seen even in a brief review of many of the espionage cases against the United States, which have occurred over past years. However, certain situational factors or suitability issues can make an individual predisposed to volunteer to spy or vulnerable to exploitation by foreign intelligence officers. According to the 2002 PERSEREC study, "most known American spies (80%) demonstrated one or more conditions or behaviors of security concern" before they turned to espionage. Reporting suitability issues is a protective or preventive measure that can help to head-off a developing problem that could lead to spying for a foreign government. While reports of behaviors of security concern or personal crises by co-workers have led to the apprehension of some American spies, reluctance to report these issues has also allowed other spies to persist in their crimes.

INTRODUCTION

According to the PERSEREC study, one-third of all espionage against the U.S. since 1945 was conducted by persons with security clearances who worked in either the intelligence or communications fields. In many cases

of insider espionage, an individual's colleagues or friends did not act on indicators and the case went on for longer than necessary.

While there is no absolute prevention, certain measures can possibly deter or at least detect espionage. You can play a vital role in this effort. We need you to be aware of certain suitability issues and potential espionage indicators and to report your concerns. Working together, we can identify issues earlier, render assistance before the situation becomes irreversible, and ultimately protect the security of our mission.

The reporting criteria defined in this guide are intended to heighten your awareness of suitability issues and potential espionage indicators. Some behaviors are more readily apparent than others, and as we are dealing with human behavior, observations will be subjective. As managers and coworkers, we are not expected to become armchair security officers or psychologists, nor are we expected to conduct our own investigations to verify or validate information. Our role is to be aware of potential issues and to exercise good judgment in determining what and when to report.

SUITABILITY ISSUES

According to the PERSEREC study, "one-fourth of known American spies experienced a personal life crisis (such as a divorce, death of someone close, or a love affair gone awry) in the months before they decided to attempt espionage."

Suitability issues may render a person vulnerable for exploitation. These issues are more common than espionage indicators and only occasionally identify espionage risk. People experiencing stressful situations sometimes exhibit general suitability issues, such as mood changes or social withdrawal. In cases where suitability issues are involved, early intervention is the key to quick, effective resolution. We intervene not solely to prevent espionage, but also because we care about each other and the organization. The following suitability issues are of concern because, if left unchecked, they could: impair the health, well-being, or performance of the employee; disrupt or demoralize the entire work unit; and diminish productivity.

- Drug or alcohol abuse.

- Repeated irresponsibility.
- An “above the rules” attitude.
- Financial irresponsibility.
- Repeated impulsive behaviors.
- Extreme immaturity.
- Willingness to violate the rights of others to achieve one’s own ends.
- Accumulating or overwhelming life crises or career disappointments.
- Willingness to break rules or violations of laws and regulations.

POTENTIAL ESPIONAGE INDICATORS

The fact that an individual exhibits one or more of these indicators does not automatically mean that he or she is engaged in espionage. However, based upon the situation, such factors can be cause for concern and might merit further investigation to determine whether espionage is a possibility.

We should report observations of one or more of the following indicators pertaining to a person with access to classified information:

- Unexplained affluence
- Failing to report overseas travel
- Showing unusual interest in information outside the job scope.
- Keeping unusual work hours.
- Taking classified material home.
- Unreported or concealed contacts with foreign nationals
- Unreported contact with foreign government, military, or intelligence officials.
- Attempting to gain new accesses without the need to know.
- Unexplained absences.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

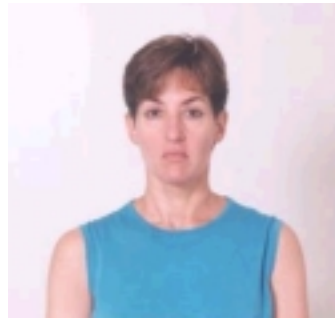
*“If you want to do these people a favor who have problems – and I’m talking from experience – **say something**. If somebody had said something to me and put a block in front of me and said ‘I think Jeff’s got a problem and I don’t think that he’s*

*handling it very well,' that would have been enough to **stop the process.**"*

-- Jeffrey Carney (U.S. Air Force, convicted spy)

Apathy, disbelief, or fear of reprisal can cause us to look away rather than confront troublesome behavior. But looking the other way from suitability and CI issues can pose a risk to an individual's well-being as well as to our mission and national security.

You can make a difference. The **Ana B. Montes** investigation reminded DIA that employee intervention works. Montes' arrest was facilitated by the report by a DIA employee who was a former coworker.



The coworker reported suspicions regarding her behavior, work ethics, and need to know certain information unrelated to her duties. In 2000, DIA investigators identified her as a likely Cuban espionage agent and alerted the FBI.

WHY WE HESITATE TO TAKE ACTION

Reporting a concern about a coworker can be an emotional and difficult task. As Americans, we're taught to respect others' privacy. Distrust of bureaucracy may lead some to believe that authorities will overreact. We may choose to avoid uncomfortable situations and not report information if there is a chance that others will discover the source. However, keep in mind that the Privacy Act allows individuals who provide information to investigators to request confidentiality.

We all experience emotional factors that may influence our willingness to report derogatory information about a coworker. Problems arise when these feelings prevent us from fulfilling our responsibilities to our organization, our nation, and our colleagues.

The following are examples of some common attitudes and beliefs that may hinder us from reporting potentially significant suitability or CI issues. By understanding these factors, we can go beyond them and see them as the excuses they really are.

Social Influences. *“I should mind my own business and not get involved.”*

Transfer of Responsibility. *“Someone else will report it. It’s not my job. His supervisor should report it.”*

Fear of Reaction. *“If I report it, they will either ignore it or blow it out of proportion.”*

Conflict and Confidentiality. *“If people find out or deduce that I reported information, no one will trust me and the working environment will be tense.”*

Disbelief. *“I can’t believe that Helen would do something like that. I’ve worked with her for years, and she’s as loyal as you and I.”*

Fear of Being Paranoid. *“I’m being paranoid – there’s nothing wrong with John. I must be overreacting, and my paranoia will do nothing but get him into trouble.”*

The emotional trials described above can cause us to feel stress and anxiety. Armed with an understanding of what they mean, we can challenge these factors and overcome them in order to make the rational decision to report.

WHAT WE CARE ABOUT

The following list of behaviors are grounded in the Director of Central Intelligence Directive (DCID) 6/4, *Personnel Security Standards and Procedures Governing Eligibility for Access to Sensitive Compartmented Information*, and have been used in security clearance and access determinations since the 1970s. This list of behaviors contains only **examples** of behaviors that may signify that an individual might volunteer to pass classified information or is vulnerable or in need of assistance. **Not all behaviors are actionable.** However, in combination or at severe levels and left unchecked, they could pose a risk to the individual's well-being or to national security. We must be aware of potential issues and exercise good judgment in determining what and when to report. Remember, early reporting often allows intervention that will assist the employee in getting the help they need.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health

Alcohol or Other Substance Abuse or Dependence

- Appearing intoxicated at work.
- Irregular work schedules.
- Sleeping at the desk.
- Driving while intoxicated.
- Concealing alcohol at work or in the car.
- Ability to consume five or more drinks with little effect.
- Unexplained, repeated absences on Monday and/or Friday.
- Going "on and off the wagon."
- Cannot remember something that happened while drinking.
- Use of alcohol to cope with stress.
- Use of illicit/illegal substances.
- Misuse of prescription medication (other than as prescribed).
- Uncharacteristically slurred speech, disorientation, or lack of coordination.

Mental Health Issues

- Unexplained changes in mood.
- Increased nervousness or anxiety.
- Decline in performance or work habits.

- Changes in personal hygiene.
- Expression of unusual thoughts, perceptions, or expectations.
- Pattern of lying.
- Talk of or attempt to harm oneself.

Inappropriate Interpersonal Or Criminal Behavior

Extreme, Persistent Interpersonal Difficulties

- Argumentative or insulting behavior toward work associates or family that has generated workplace discussion or has disrupted the workplace environment.
- Tends to isolate self, rejects any social interaction, apparent lack of social supports, unexplained and manifested depression.
- Verbal outbursts, usually drawing attention of those not directly involved in the exchange.
- Exploitation or mistreatment of others, usually through intimidation or abuse of power or position.
- Disruptive workplace behavior that resists supervisory direction or counseling.

Hostile or Vindictive Behavior

- Verbal or physical threats toward work associates or family.
- Extreme or recurrent statements demonstrating level of bitterness, resentment, vengeance, or disgruntlement.
- Any occasion of violence, throwing things.
- Stalking-type behavior (such as unwanted following, harassing phone calls).
- Threats or attempts to get even with work associates.
- Extreme or recurrent violation of rule(s) or law(s).

Criminal Behavior

- Theft
- Fraud (for example, misuse of leave, voucher, tax, travel or training advances, or government credit cards).
- Spouse or child abuse or neglect.

- Attempts to enlist others in illegal or questionable activity.

Finances

Financial Conduct

- Calls at work from creditors.
- Denial of credit.
- Garnishments.
- Bounced or bad checks.
- Repossessions, unfavorable judgments, or other indications of difficulty.
- Bankruptcy.
- Negligent/tardy child or spousal support payments.
- Reckless or compulsive spending trends, frequent gambling, or evident gambling debt.
- Improper handling of organization finances or property, including repeated delinquent accountings for advances, unexplained cash.
- Shortages or loss of property, sloppy handling of cash funds, disregard for financial/property administration regulations.

Unexplained or Sudden Affluence

- Living/spending beyond one's apparent means.
- Unexplained or sudden large sums of cash.
- Sudden windfalls or settlement of large debt.
- Claims of significant independent income from inheritance, wealthy relatives, gifts, investments, family business, etc.
- Personal possessions inconsistent with salary.

Unreported Foreign Contact and Travel

Unreported Contacts

Unreported personal contacts with:

- Foreign intelligence services.
- Foreign governments or organizations.
- Unauthorized persons seeking classified information.

Unreported Close Continuing Contact

With foreign nationals, including intimate encounters, shared living quarters or marriage.

Unreported Relationships

Unreported relatives, associates, or person sharing living quarters connected with:

- Foreign governments.
- Foreign intelligence services.
- Criminal or terrorist activities.
- Disloyalty toward the U.S.

Unreported Foreign Travel

Any unreported personal foreign travel.

Classified Information and Computers

Inappropriate, Unusual, or Excessive Interest in Classified Information (outside current assignment)

- Violation of need-know principle.
- Inquiries about operations and projects to which he/she no longer has access.

Mishandling of Classified Information

- Revelations to unauthorized persons.
- Leaks to media.
- Unauthorized contact with media.
- Unauthorized removals, including magnetic media.
- Collecting/storing classified material outside approved facilities.
- Lax security habits that resist management counseling (such as discussing classified information on nonsecure phone, not properly securing classified information or areas, working on classified material at home).

- Statements or actions that demonstrate an individual believes that the rules do not apply to him/her.

Misuse of Computers

- Accessing databases without authorization.
- Unauthorized searching/browsing through computer libraries.
- Unauthorized purposeful destruction of information on Agency computers.

Divided Loyalty or Allegiance to the U.S.

- Personal possession and use of a foreign passport.
- Strongly voiced advocacy of acts of force or violence against the U.S. Government.
- Association or sympathy with persons advocating such acts.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

As you make that tough decision to call, remember the words of convicted spy Jeffrey Carney: **“If you want to do these people a favor who have problems – and I’m talking from experience – say something.”**

WHO SHOULD I CALL?

If you have a counterintelligence (CI) concern regarding a coworker or associate, you may wish to talk to your corporate or organizational security officer or CI manager who understands the security and CI ramifications. You may also contact the responsible CI organization directly involved in national CI matters. These agencies include:

- a. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, who is responsible for CI matters within the United States, its territories, and overseas US Embassies.

- b. Army Counterintelligence for the US Army.
- c. Air Force Office of Special Investigations for the US Air Force.
- d. Naval Criminal Investigative Service for the Department of Navy.

Many US Government agencies have CI offices or organizations and work closely with the aforementioned CI organizations.